We Might Not Make It

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We Might Not Make It

by WordsAblaze

Summary

> “This will not become part of my design. I’m so sorry, Hannibal.”
>
> Before Hannibal can reply, Will lets his hands drop down to the other man’s neck, and squeezes.
>
> Hannibal's eyes widen and he lets out a choked cry; Will sobs at the sound but presses harder, digging his fingers in, knowing Chiyoh will later never forgive him when he tells her where to find her ward, waiting until Hannibal stills before pulling back with an aborted whimper.

Notes

> i've been nice lately but the prodigal son (angst) has returned...
>
> day 28 prompts used: sacrifice

See the end of the work for more notes

Nothing beautiful ever lasts.

Will has known this to be true ever since he was a child who could barely grasp the concept of beauty, and he has been reminded time and time again that beautiful things have temporary lives, especially if they're *his* beautiful things.

And this? This pure moment of darkness, the two of them bathed in righteous blood, offering themselves in tandem to the uncertain whims of the ocean itself? It's beautiful, and it was never going to last.

Will can't feel himself as they fall, but he can feel Hannibal, the way their hands and legs and souls are tangled together, and he keeps his focus on him as they hit the water, ignoring the stinging of his skin and the screaming of his lungs in favour of tightening his grip and refusing to let go. It works, and he drags them both up, past the angry roar of fate and sea foam, onto steady ground. Only then does he remember how to breathe, unceremoniously heaving in as much air as possible, one of his hands remaining clutched tightly in Hannibal's as he does.

"Will," Hannibal breathes, pulling him close.

Practically falling atop him, Will laughs—it's little more than a disguised sob—and blinks the blood and ocean out of his eyes as he looks up. He almost collapses under the weight of the pride in Hannibal's eyes, and lets his head drop on the other man's shoulder, still breathing too heavily to form intelligible words.

"This is… far more than I could have ever wanted," Hannibal admits eventually, the most sincere he's ever sounded despite the shakiness of his voice.

Will lifts his head and smiles, promptly wincing when that pulls on his recent stab wound. He tries again, a more lopsided smile. "Thank you."

Hannibal shakes his head, glancing between him and the ocean with unusually soft eyes. "There is nobody to thank… but yourself. This is your design, my beautiful Will."

As if on cue, sirens echoes above them.

A heavy weight falls through Will's stomach, and tears fill his eyes before he can stop them. He hits a weak fist against Hannibal's shoulder. "Why would you call me that? Why would you… *why* would you ruin this for me? Beauty—beauty is always taken away, you know that. It doesn't *last*. It was— *supposed* to last. How could you…?"

He knows he's being irrational, that Hannibal would *never* try to take this away from him, that it would be unfair not to credit Jack for his fishing skills, but the anger inside of him has to go somewhere, and he can't think very far past breathing, and it's not *fair* because he was supposed to be able to have this *one* thing, this *beautiful thing,* and —

"Will," Hannibal murmurs, his gaze gentle as he turns Will's head towards himself, "It's alright. Perhaps… this is merely the penance for... denying our true selves for so long. You

have done so, so well, my dear Will. Please... do not forget that."

But Will grits his teeth and shakes his head. He glances down to Hannibal's bullet wound, still traitorously oozing, and smiles softly. He gently cups both sides of Hannibal's face, something twisting and writhing inside of him when his fingers leave red smudges behind as he brushes his tears away, and exhales slowly. "This will *not* become part of my design. I'm so sorry, Hannibal."

Before Hannibal can reply, he lets his hands drop down to the other man's neck, and *squeezes.*

Hannibal's eyes widen and he lets out a choked cry; Will sobs at the sound but presses harder, digging his fingers in, knowing Chiyoh will later never forgive him when he tells her where to find her ward, waiting until Hannibal stills before pulling back with an aborted whimper.

If he had time, he would scream until his vocal cords gave out. He doesn't, so he resigns himself to just the one before stumbling to his feet, hooking his arms under Hannibal's shoulders and dragging him further along the shore, towards a shadowed rocky alcove. Slipping his shirt off his aching shoulders, he wraps it firmly around Hannibal's stomach, fumbling with and retying the knot twice before he's certain it won't come undone, praying that his efforts help with stemming the blood loss.

Now shivering almost violently, he watches Hannibal's chest rise and fall until he can feel whatever is left of his heart crumble inside his chest, at which point he leans down and presses a soft kiss to Hannibal's forehead. "Please forgive me," he whispers.

And, with that, he retraces his footsteps along the sand until he reaches the point where they had emerged from the ocean, then continues forwards until his knees buckle in protest. Only then does he allow himself to shut down, sinking just below the surface of his ever-growing guilt and waiting patiently until Jack's face swims into view above him.

"Where is he?" Jack grits out.

Will offers him a small, bloody smile. "You know… how much he… loved swimming."

"Loved ?" Jack echoes, eyes narrow. And he keeps them narrow as hands roughly tug Will to his feet, someone cursing as his legs fold almost immediately and he almost topples right back to the ground.

Once steady again, held between two agents who clearly have no sympathy for him, Will shrugs. "I don't see him. Do you?"

Jack steps forwards, searching for a better answer in Will's eyes. He must not find one—he never will, that's not how Will's design goes—because he sighs, wiping a hand over his face. "He's dead, then?"

Will forces his expression to crumple, furrowing his brows and wobbling his chin as the tears he's barely been holding down spring to his eyes. He doesn't reply, and Jack takes that as his

answer, as *confirmation*, waving for the two agents holding him up to take him back to the house, where they must have parked.

He manages to steal one last lungful of their crime scene before he's shoved into a van, handcuffs tightened painfully around his wrists. He doesn't even mind, because their insistence on containing him as quickly as possible means they won't search for the corpse they expect to find until he's behind bars, at which point, if his message had been delivered correctly, Chiyoh's intervention will have left nothing to be found.

"Freak," one of the agents mutters under his breath.

Will doesn't bother to acknowledge him, clenching his hands into fists and digging his nails into his palms as the van begins to move. Jack must have ordered them to ignore traffic laws because Will knows first-hand that suspects aren't meant to be jostled or injured during transportation, but he can't exactly blame him.

"At least there's only one of them now," another agent mutters, clearly encouraged by his silence. Despite only gritting his teeth in response, he receives a blow to the stomach that has him gasping. "And you should remember that before you try anything again," the agent continues, flexing his fingers.

He doesn't know where exactly these agents have found such a brazen sense of confidence, but he can imagine it has something to do with the assumption that the fearsome Chesapeake Ripper is dead coupled with the fragile picture of him that Jack had spent years painting. It gives him an overall advantage, he knows, but he can't help wishing it didn't make people feel quite so entitled to violence.

Still, as the van doors open and the inevitability of another, more violent round of caged boredom and psychiatric testing hits him with full force, Will swallows his rage, slumps in the agents' bruising grasp, and slips into the role of a fragile, shattered teacup; he just hopes that Hannibal doesn't wait too long to find and glue him back together again.

and all the king's horses and all the king's men—

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